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6.—*An Address pronounced at the Opening of the New York Athenæum, December 14, 1824.* By HENRY WHEATON. 8vo. pp. 44. New-York. C. Wiley.

As a suitable subject on which to address an association formed exclusively for literary purposes, for the diffusion of knowledge and the improvement of taste and intellect, Mr Wheaton in this discourse has taken a rapid view of what has already been accomplished by the American mind, and made some reflections on what may reasonably be hoped to be achieved hereafter. He shows the difficulties we have had to surmount in overcoming the first great obstacles to the cultivation of letters; we had a wilderness to subdue, personal safety to look after, cruel Indian wars to carry on, wants to provide for, political rights to secure and maintain, and at last the struggle of the revolution, and the hard fought contest for our independence. These were the absorbing occupations in which the lives, and thoughts, and hearts of all were engaged; and amidst this series of sufferings and dangers, of privations and labors, to which we were subjected from the very circumstances of our condition, it could not be expected that much room would be left for the mere embellishments of life, for literature and the arts, for the culture of mind and the sports of the imagination. These topics Mr Wheaton touches with discrimination. He makes it appear, however, that a great and rapid change has taken place since our political organisation has been established, and liberty and security have become the birthright of every citizen. The fruits of this change are already obvious, and its causes are growing stronger and more active every day. Our literary progress during the last few years, compared with what it was at any former period, has been not less remarkable, than the happy success of our political experiment, and free institutions.

‘Among the causes,’ says Mr Wheaton, ‘which have hitherto impeded the cultivation of letters in the United States, may probably be enumerated the want of a national language and literature peculiar to ourselves, and the consequent servitude to foreign models. But this will hardly be considered as a sufficient apology for our past literary deficiencies, when we consider that our fathers spoke and wrote the noble dialect of England, not as a foreign language, but as their own native idiom; that they broke off from the parent stem, after that idiom had been perfected by the pens of Shakspeare, and Milton, and Taylor, and Clarendon; that their descendants have constantly been supplied with the standard productions of the British press, and have never been strangers to the real or supposed improvements, which each successive age has wrought in English diction. During all this lapse of time, the

genial soil of England has never ceased to bear fruits and flowers worthy of the spring time of her literature, though often suppressed in their growth by foreign and false modes of culture. Our countrymen were therefore, in this respect, placed upon an equal footing with their British brethren. Originality of language is immaterial to the success of literary enterprise. The language of the mind is to be found in its own vigorous, overpowering thoughts and emotions. It matters not in what dialect they are poured forth. The forms of diction used by different nations, who write the same language, are no more necessarily alike, than those of different individuals; nor is the imitation of the classical models of English style more likely to have an unfavorable influence upon an American, than a British writer—upon a Franklin or a Frisbie, than upon a Burke or a Johnson. It is the faculty of true genius to assimilate with itself, and incorporate into its own intellectual nature, the elements produced by other minds. Thus the poetical powers of Dante and Milton were nourished, and sustained, and strengthened, by the ambrosial food of Virgil and Homer. In highly gifted and well regulated minds, the profound study and ardent admiration of such models produce merely the effects of that liberal imitation, which teaches them to think, speak, and write, as other great men would have thought, spoken, and written, when placed in the same circumstances. We shall therefore find ourselves compelled to attribute our literary poverty to the want of true intellectual courage and enterprise,—to the want of that noble self reliance and consciousness of intellectual power, which has of late only been seen among us; rather than to the possession and full enjoyment of the literary riches, which have been showered upon us from the abundant sources of the parent country.' pp. 10—12.

In regard to the influence of a uniform language of long standing on our literature, and intellectual progress, we have given our views in another part of the present number of our journal. We agree with the author, that a servile imitation of foreign models will never contribute to bring out American mind; we must think and write in our own way, and follow the promptings of a judgment matured in the school of manners and institutions purely American, and of an imagination kindled by the glowing features of nature peculiar to our own country, before we can arrive at a high degree of excellence, or form a literature and intellectual character, which shall distinguish us as a nation from the other enlightened nations. This can never be done by treading in the beaten track of an old language, nor by striving to imitate models constructed under circumstances in so many respects totally different from our own.

Mr Wheaton next considers the disadvantages under which we labor, by reason of our small libraries, and slender endowments of seminaries of learning. These are evils to which we must submit

for a long time ; but they will be diminished every year ; a taste for reading, for the luxuries of the mind, will create a demand for books and for the means of acquiring experimental science ; and in proportion to this demand, and the increase of wealth, by which it may be supplied, libraries, museums, laboratories, and depositories of choice specimens of the arts, will be multiplied and enlarged. In pursuing his subject, Mr Wheaton takes a broad view of the ancient republics, and points out the connexion between the principles on which they were founded, and the rapid growth of the arts and sciences to which they gave encouragement. He traces analogies and causes sometimes farther than we can follow him, but his investigation indicates a wide research into the history of the illustrious periods of antiquity, as well as deep reflection on the nature, the moving springs, the enlightening spirit, and self preserving tendency of our own government.

7.—*Address delivered before the Massachusetts Peace Society, at the Ninth Anniversary, December 25, 1824.* BY JOHN WARE, M. D. Boston. 8vo. pp. 24. Office of Christian Register. 1825.

THERE are few objects, which at first view appear more disproportioned to the means by which it is proposed to attain them, than the professed design of the Society before whom this address was delivered. It would seem the very height of chimerical enthusiasm to attempt, by the efforts of a few philanthropic individuals, to abolish the practice of war, a custom which may be traced back farther, perhaps, than any other in the history of the human race, which in all ages has engrossed so large a portion of the talents of individuals, and of the resources of nations, and which it has required the whole experience of the world, and eighteen centuries of Christianity, to bring to that degree of refinement with which it is now practised. Notwithstanding that often repeated truth, so consoling to the beginners of vast undertakings, that many great results are produced by apparently small causes, we should be inclined to look upon the existence of such a society as offering little encouragement indeed to the hopes of the philanthropist, did we think it were to be regarded as the only source, from which a change in the habits of the world might be expected to arise. It is an excellent thing doubtless, that all the arguments and reasonings, which can be adduced to show that war is no less unnecessary than pernicious, and all the speculations by which the practicability of abolishing it may be made probable, should be brought as often, and under as many forms as possible, before the public. But how few are affected by arguments, and how small a portion of the